

University of Alberta

Department of Music

presents

LUBA and IRENEUS ZUK

piano duo

Wednesday, November 19, 1986

8:00 p.m.

CONVOCATION HALL
OLD ARTS BUILDING

PROGRAMME

Variations on a theme by
Joseph Haydn, Op. 56 b

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Capriccio (1964)

Michael Baker *
(b. 1941)

Fantasy (1982) **

David Keane *
(b. 1943)

Ronde Villageoise (1986 version) **

Clermont Pépin *
(b. 1926)

Intermission

Seven Pieces from "Mikrokosmos"

Bela Bartok
(1881-1945)

Bulgarian Rhythm
Chord and Trill Study
Perpetuum Mobile
Short Canon and its Inversion
New Hungarian Folk Song
Chromatic Invention
Ostinato

Second Sonata (1983) **

George Fiala *
(b. 1922)

Allegro energico
Cantilena: Andante sostenuto
Scherzo-Finale: Allegro giusto

Paganini Variations (1941)
(b. 1913)

Witold Lutoslawski

* Canadian composer

** Edmonton premiere

PROGRAMME NOTES

MICHAEL BAKER (b. 1941)

Although not a native Canadian, Michael Baker, born in Florida, moved to Canada in 1958. Studying at the University of British Columbia, he obtained a Bachelor of Music degree under the tutelage of Jean Coulthard and Elliot Weisgarber. He returned to the United States to complete a Masters degree at Western Washington State in 1972. These studies were augmented by sessions with Malcolm Arnold at the Shawnigan Summer School of the Arts in 1971 and 1972, and training under Lennox Berkley in England in 1975. Commissions from well known artists and prestigious arts organizations including the National Ballet of Canada, the Canadian Arts Trio and the Toronto Dance Theatre have resulted in a varied body of works which have been performed in the U.S.A., Europe, the Orient and the South Pacific. The Capriccio for Two Pianos composed during his University of British Columbia days, represents what Baker terms the "Contemporary-Romantic" nature of his work. Among his other works are two ballets, "The Letter" and "Washington Square", works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, piano and voice.

CAPRICCIO FOR TWO PIANOS (1964)

True to the nineteenth century capriccio form suggested by the title, this work is in ternary form. The repetitive, rhythmic opening is answered by a new theme in the contrasting section which is driven through several permutations of tempo and texture. The overall impressionistic effect is achieved through manipulation of augmented and seventh chords and parallel movement. This twentieth century capriccio illustrates Baker's effective blending of "neoclassical" and "neoromantic" idioms.

DAVID KEANE (b. 1943)

Born in the United States, David Keane obtained his musical training (B.Sc., B.Mus., M.Mus.) at the Ohio State University where, in 1963, he was the first composer to use the new and embryonic electronic music studio. He remained particularly interested in electronic music and while still a student began to produce works for film, radio and television as well as music for the concert hall. After a short period of performing and composing in Vancouver, British Columbia, Keane was appointed director of Queen's University Electronic Music Studios in 1970. His works have been performed and broadcast throughout North America and Europe. His book, "Tape Music Composition", considered a major contribution to the field, was published in 1980 by Oxford University Press (London).

FANTASY (1982)

The Fantasy for two pianos was commissioned by Luba and Ireneus Zuk for a premiere performance in March, 1982. The Ukrainian-Canadian background of the Zuks suggested the possibility of finding a starting place among the great wealth of Ukrainian folk music. The kernel of the Fantasy is the remarkably simple tune, "Where Will We Spend the Night?". Certainly, the title was chosen with the traditional sense of the term (fantasy, fancy, fantasia) in mind. But also, the term "fantasy" suggests the literary genre in which wonderful, magical events can take place in the normal order of things. In the Fantasy for two pianos I have sought to create the illusion that both the simple Ukrainian tune and the pianos themselves undergo the gentle but somewhat magical transformations that befit a fantasy.

(David Keane)

CLERMONT PEPIN (b. 1926)

At eleven years of age Clermont Pépin was presented by Wilfrid Pelletier to the audiences of the Quebec and Montreal Symphony Orchestras as a composer and conductor. He studied in Montreal with Claude Champagne and Artur Letondal, at the Curtis Institute of Philadelphia, the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto and again in Montreal. Winning the Prix d'Europe in 1949 as pianist, Pépin went to study piano with Yves Nat and Lazare Levy and composition and analysis with Arthur Honegger, André Jolivet and Olivier Messiaen. The influence of these musical forces and the study of works by Schonberg, Berg and Messiaen on his writing, style and aesthetic is evident in his experiments with serialism and striving for conciseness, greater rhythmic variety and a keen sense of contrast. His career took him back to Montreal where he rose to the position of director of the Conservatoire. His teaching and administrative duties in this post did not preclude the compositional activity which delved further into the serial techniques he explored in Paris. The extensive body of his works includes ballets, works for orchestra, electronic modes, chamber ensembles, voice and piano, among them the important Symphony No. 3, "Quasar", five String Quartets, and a series of "Monades" - works for various combinations of instruments.

RONDE VILLAGEOISE (1961, rev. 1986)

This work is an excerpt from the ballet L'OISEAU-PHENIX based on a Canadian legend collected by Marius Barbeau and written in 1956. The "Ronde villageoise" is the opening piece of the ballet which was premiered in 1956 by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, with a choreography by Ludmilla Chiriaeff on a scenario by François Gernier. The two-piano version was written in 1961 and extended in 1986.

(Clermont Pépin)

GEORGE FIALA (b. 1922)

Born in Kiev, in the Ukraine, George Fiala became a naturalized Canadian in 1955. His training and background are largely European. Studies at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Kiev under Ukrainian composer Volodmyr Groudine, Lev Revutsky, Boris Liatoshynsky and Andrew Olkhovsky were enhanced by opportunities to exchange ideas with Prokofiev, Shostakovitch and Khatchaturian. Further studies were undertaken with Hansmaria Dombrowski in Berlin and Leon Jongen in Brussels. While in Belgium he came into contact with and was influenced by the new Parisian school represented by Boulez, Nigg and Leibowitz. Fiala brought all this experience to Montreal in 1949 where he has been composing, performing as pianist and organist, and teaching ever since. As a commissioned composer his contribution to Canadian music has been to reconcile his more traditional method of composition with the principles of serialism. His works after 1960 illustrate this syncretism, an accomplishment which is perhaps most truly representative of the contemporary Canadian spirit. Of his many works - orchestral, chamber, vocal, piano - major ones are Capriccio, Musique Concertante, Concerto for Violin and Symphony No. 4, "Ukrainian".

SECOND SONATA FOR TWO PIANOS (1983)

When writing program notes to a piece of instrumental music, the main difficulty is rather obvious: instrumental music does not usually have any program and therefore should not require program notes at all. Even the simplest program notes often only contribute to clouding the real meaning of a given musical work. Therefore, the purely musical content cannot be explained - least of all "clarified" - by any kind of literary notes, no matter who writes them or what is said. These program notes to my SECOND SONATA for Two Pianos contain no striking revelations, no deep "insight" whatsoever into its meaning. Very simply, my Sonata is a musical work for two performers enjoying what they are doing and hoping to infect with their enthusiasm every real music lover in the audience. This is exactly why the SONATA closes on a happy note reminiscent of the ragtime music. And why, disregarding the possible contradiction in terms, the composer wouldn't mind at all if his SECOND SONATA for Two Pianos became known as the "RAGTIME" SONATA.

(George Fiala)